

Amendments to the Claims

1 – 46. (canceled)

47. (presently amended) A method for determining whether an agent modulates a ~~identifying a modulator of~~ Mdm2- ~~HAUSP~~ herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP) interaction, comprising the steps of:

(a) obtaining or generating an *in vitro* system comprising Mdm2 and HAUSP;

(b) contacting the *in vitro* system with a candidate agent ~~modulator~~; and

(c) determining ~~[[if]]~~ whether the candidate agent increases or decreases ~~modulator~~ ~~modulates~~ Mdm2-HAUSP interaction in the *in vitro* system, ~~[[.]]~~

wherein determination of an increase or decrease of Mdm2-HAUSP interaction in (c) indicates that the agent modulates Mdm2-HAUSP interaction.

48. (presently amended) The method of claim 47, wherein the determining ~~determination~~ in step (c) ~~is made by~~ comprises comparing Mdm2- ~~HAUSP~~ herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP) interaction in the *in vitro* system of step (b) with Mdm2-HAUSP interaction in a second *in vitro* system comprising Mdm2 and HAUSP in the absence of the candidate agent, ~~modulator~~. wherein determination of an increase or decrease of Mdm2-HAUSP interaction in the *in vitro* system of step (b) compared to the second *in vitro* system indicates that the agent modulates Mdm2-HAUSP interaction.

49 – 53. (canceled)

54. (presently amended) A method for determining whether ~~identifying~~ an agent that is reactive with Mdm2, comprising the steps of:

(a) contacting a candidate agent with Mdm2, in the presence of ~~HAUSP~~ herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP); and

(b) ~~assessing the ability of~~ determining whether the candidate agent ~~[[to]]~~ inhibits Mdm2-HAUSP interaction~~[[.]]~~ ,

wherein determination of inhibition of Mdm2-HAUSP interaction in (b) compared to Mdm2-HAUSP interaction in the absence of the agent indicates that the agent is reactive with Mdm2.

55 – 56. (canceled)

57. (presently amended) A method for determining whether ~~identifying~~ an agent ~~that~~ is reactive with ~~HAUSP~~ herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP), comprising the steps of:

(a) contacting a candidate agent with HAUSP, in the presence of Mdm2; and

(b) ~~assessing the ability of whether~~ the candidate agent ~~[[to]]~~ inhibits HAUSP-Mdm2 interaction~~[[.]]~~ ,

wherein determination of inhibition of Mdm2-HAUSP interaction in (b) compared to Mdm2-HAUSP interaction in the absence of the agent indicates that the agent is reactive with HAUSP.

58 – 60. (canceled)

61. (new) A method for determining whether an agent affects one or more Mdm2-associated, HAUSP-associated, or p53-associated biological events in a cell, comprising the steps of:

(a) contacting a cell with an agent that is reactive with Mdm2 or HAUSP, as determined by the method of claim 54 or 57, wherein the cell comprises Mdm2, herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP), or p53; and

(b) determining whether the agent activates or increases, or inhibits or decreases, one or more Mdm2-associated, HAUSP-associated, or p53-associated biological events in the cell,

wherein determination of an activation or increase, or inhibition or decrease on one or more Mdm2-associated, HAUSP-associated, or p53-associated biological events in the cell indicates that the agent affects one or more Mdm2-associated, HAUSP-associated, or p53-associated biological events in the cell.

62. (new) A method for determining whether an agent modulates Mdm2-herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP) interaction, comprising the steps of:

(a) obtaining or generating a first and a second *in vitro* system comprising Mdm2 and HAUSP;

(b) contacting the first *in vitro* system with a candidate agent;

(c) contacting the second *in vitro* system with the candidate agent and an antibody, or fragment thereof, that specifically binds Mdm2; and

(c) determining a level of HAUSP activity in the first system and the second system,

wherein determination of an increase or decrease of HAUSP activity in the first *in vitro* system compared to the second *in vitro* system indicates that the agent modulates Mdm2-HAUSP interaction.

63. (new) A method for determining whether an agent modulates Mdm2-herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP) interaction, comprising the steps of:

(a) obtaining or generating a first and a second *in vitro* system comprising Mdm2 and HAUSP;

(b) contacting the first *in vitro* system with a candidate agent;

(c) contacting the second *in vitro* system with the candidate agent and an antibody, or fragment thereof, that specifically binds HAUSP; and

(c) determining a level of Mdm2 activity in the first system and the second system,

wherein determination of an increase or decrease of Mdm2 activity in the first *in vitro* system compared to the second *in vitro* system indicates that the agent modulates Mdm2-HAUSP interaction.